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"The people who are Illyrians and Celts": Strabo and the identities of the 'barbarians' from Illyricum*

Danijel DZINO

Izvleček

Avtor v članku ponovno preuči mnenje antičnega geografa Strabona o Japodih kot "mešanem ljudstvu", ki je bilo v stroki že obravnavano. Postavi ga v kontekst modernih znanstvenih diskusij o naravi identitet prazgodovinskih in antičnih ljudstev na mediteranskem obrobju.

Ključbe besede: Japodi, Strabon, Ilirik, antična identiteta, antična etnična zavest

Abstract

This work re-examines the perception of the ancient geographer Strabo in relation to the Iapodes as a 'mixed people', and places this in the context of current scholarly debates on the nature of the identity of pre-historic and proto-historical peoples of the Mediterranean 'periphery'.

Keywords: Iapodes, Strabo, Illyricum, ancient identity, ancient ethnicity

INTRODUCTION

The geographer Strabo made peculiar and intriguing remarks regarding the ethnicity of the peoples from ancient Illyricum, known to his contemporaries as the Iapodes and Scordisci. He stated that both peoples are of 'mixed origins', the Iapodes: Celto-Illyrian (4.6.10; 7.5.2; 7.5.4), and the Scordisci: a Celto-Thracian-Illyrian mixture (7.5.1, cf. 7.1.1; 7.3.11; 7.5.2). These statements led to numerous and often-fruitless scholarly debates in the past that neither shed any light on the nature of the identity of those peoples nor explained why Strabo perceived them as such.[1]

These remarks of Strabo are suddenly appearing in the intersection of several different contemporary focal points of scholarship in ancient history and archaeology. On one hand is a renewed interest in

* I would like to thank Marjeta Šašel-Kos, Dragan Božič (Institute for Archaeology, Scientific Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Ljubljana) and Dubravka Balen-Letunić (Archaeological Museum Zagreb) on useful suggestions and constructive criticism that significantly improved the quality of this work. I am in particular grateful to Ms Barbara Sidwell (Adelaide University) for her help in editing this paper and her sharp observations, which I took freedom to incorporate in the paper without specific acknowledgments.

[1] The Iapodes were firstly regarded as the *"illyrisch-keltisches Mischvolk"* cf. G. Alföldy, *Bevölkerung und Gesellschaft der römischen Provinz Dalmatien* (Budapest 1965) 41; K. Kurtz, Zur Ethnizität der Japoden, *Listy Filologické* 90, 1967, 259–269 listing older literature. Later, they are seen as the Illyrians, culturally influenced by the Celts, but not mixed with them, J. J. Wilkes, The Population of Roman Dalmatia, in: *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Romische Welt* 2/6 (Berlin, New York 1977) 749–751; R. Drechsler-Bižić, Japodska grupa, in: A. Benac (ed.), *Praistorija Jugoslavenskih Zemalja* 5. *Željezno doba* (Sarajevo 1987) 439–441; B. Olujić, *Povijest Japoda. Pristup* (Zagreb 2007) 179–185 and (n. 25) below.

the work of Strabo, who is recognized as a complex author existing in the multiple discursive contexts of his age, rather than just being a faceless compiler of the earlier authorities.[2] On the other hand is the growing impact of the discipline of cultural studies on the poststructuralist interpretation of the ancient past. Amongst other things, cultural studies re-examine the social constructs such as identity and culture, using the theoretical framework developed in the examination of social processes occurring in a contemporary postcolonial, globalized world.[3] The understanding of culture and group identity, as complex but fixed structures is replaced with a view that both of them are in fact perpetually evolving and heterogeneous social processes, yet perceived as continuous and stable structures by those who participate in them.[4] *"Identity is that very process by which the multiplicity, contradiction and instability of subjectivity is signified as having coherence, continuity, stability ..."*.[5]

The poststructuralist interpretations show close, inseparable links between discourse and power: *" ... discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it."*[6] This view of Foucault has significantly influenced methodological approaches in more recent reassessments of the ancient world, convincingly showing that Graeco-Roman colonial narratives and the reality of the 19th and early 20th century European colonial discourse dominated the earlier scholarly interpretation of the classical world.[7] There is a sharp rise in the volume of scholarship that deals with the issue of identities in the ancient world that have become too voluminous to be mentioned in detail here.[8] In addition to these approaches, the criticism of Kossina/Childe 'archaeology of cultures' has significantly diminished the exclusive interpretation of archaeological cultures as reflections of ethnic identities. The position of this criticism is that the linkage of objects of material culture and identity of the social group which used them is an inadequate interpretation, as ethnicity is situational and contextual social phenomena and can be constructed only in a social context. The objects of material culture exist in numerous contexts different from ethnicity, such as gender, social hierarchy, power-relationships, fashion, etc. and should be interpreted inside these contexts.[9]

It is also important in this context to note the influence of Bourdieu's *habitus*, especially its frequent use in the recent archaeological interpretation of ethnicity and identity-construction of peoples who have no written history. Bourdieu's *habitus* is a complex concept existing halfway between sociology and philosophy. It might be roughly described as an unconscious, but durable disposition towards certain perceptions and social practices such as morality, tastes, role of sexes in the division of labour, cuisine, communication, customs etc. These dispositions constitute a particular social environment and are shaped by social and cultural practices and common experience of the group.[10] *"Children are inducted into a culture, are taught the meanings which constitute it, partly through inculca-*

2 K. Clarke, *Between Geography and History. Hellenistic Constructions of the Roman World* (Oxford 1999); D. Dueck, *Strabo of Amasia. A Greek Man of Letters in Augustan Rome* (London, New York 2000); E. Ch. L. Van der Vliet, The Romans and Us. Strabo's Geography and the Construction of Ethnicity, *Mnemosyne* 56/3, 2002, 257–272; D. Dueck, H. Lindsay, S. Pothecary (eds.), *Strabo's Cultural Geography. The Making of a Kolossourgia* (Cambridge 2005), to mention only the most recent.

3 H. K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London 1994); A. Loomba, S. Kaul, M. Bunzl (eds.), *Postcolonial studies and beyond* (Durham 2005) etc.

4 A. Appadurai, *Modernity at Large. Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis 1996) 12 ff.; J. X. Inda, R. Rosaldo, Introduction: a world in motion, in: J. X. Inda, R. Rosaldo (eds.), *The Anthropology of Globalization. A Reader* (Oxford 2002) 1–34; R. J. C. Young, *Colonial Desire. Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race* (London 1995) 29–54.

5 A. Brah, *Cartographies of Diaspora* (London 1996) 123.

6 M. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality* 1. *An introduction* (Harmondsworth 1981) 101.

7 J. Webster, N. Cooper (eds.), *Roman Imperialism. Postcolonial perspectives* (Leicester 1994); D. J. Mattingly (ed.), *Dialogues in Roman imperialism. Power, discourse and discrepant experience in the Roman Empire,* Journal of Roman Archaeology, supp. 23 (Portsmouth 1997); R. Hingley, *Roman officers and English gentlemen. The imperial origins of Roman archaeology* (London, New York 2000) etc.

8 P. Ruby, Peuples, Fictions? Ethnicité, identité ethnique et sociétés anciennes, *Revue des Etudes Anciennes* 108/1, 2006, 25–60 (Greek identity); E. Dench, *Romulus' Asylum. Roman Identities from the Age of Alexander to the Age of Hadrian* (Cambridge 2005); R. Hingley, *Globalizing Roman Culture. Unity, diversity and empire* (London, New York 2005) 14–48 (Roman identity); P. S. Wells: *The Barbarians Speak. How the conquered peoples shaped Roman Europe* (Princeton 1999) (European Iron Age population).

9 P. Graves-Brown, S. Jones, C. Gamble (eds.), *Cultural Identity and Archaeology. The construction of European communities* (London, New York 1996); S. Jones, *The Archaeology of Ethnicity. Constructing identities in the past and present* (London 1997); and especially S. Brather, *Etnische Interpretationen in der frühgeschichtlicher Archäologie. Geschichte, Grundlagen und Alternativen* (Berlin, New York 2004).

10 P. Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge 1977) 72 ff.; id., *The Logic of Practice* (Cambridge 1990). It has become popular in recent archaeological interpretation: S. J. Shennan, Introduction: archaeological approaches to cultural identity, in: id. (ed.), *Archaeological Approaches to Cultural Identity* (New York 1989) 1–32; Jones (n. 9); J. M. Hall, *Ethnic Identity in Greek Antiquity* (Cambridge 1997); M. Diepeveen-Jansen, *People, Ideas and Goods. New perspectives on 'Celtic barbarians' in Western and Central Europe 500–250 BC* (Amsterdam 2001).

tion of the appropriate habitus. We learn how to hold ourselves, how to defer to others, how to be presence for others ..."[11]

Habitus does not determine or represent personal/group identity *per se*, or ethnicity, but is a very significant part of its construction. Essentially, ethnic identity is formed through perception of difference between the cultural *habiti* in the interaction of different groups ('Us' and 'Them'), and thus it can be transformed and manipulated as a kind of social and political instrument, rather than being regarded as an already predetermined, reified structure. Ethnicity is constructed through internal self-definition of the group, but also through the influence of the external observer, especially if the external observer is in a position of political or cultural-discursive dominance over the group.[12] So, as S. Jones argues, ethnicity is constructed on the intersection between habitual dispositions (Barth's *"cultural stuff"*) and particular social conditions, especially through the interaction between different forms of *habitus* and the continuous juxtaposition of cultural differences with the 'Other'.[13]

The new methodological approaches have already resulted in a more sophisticated view of ancient societies. They disrupted earlier notions of isolated, discrete cultural or ethnic identities within antiquity. For example, scholarship dealing with the Roman Empire is now much more aware of the transitional nature and complexity of imperial identities, both individual and group, seeing them as an outcome of the globalizing processes that occurred in classical and late antiquity. The terms 'Roman' and 'Greek' begin to lose their meaning as cultural and ethnic singularities, and gradually reveal all the cultural and ethnic complexity that existed beneath them.[14] These approaches have also enabled concerted scholarly efforts in the deconstruction of a 'barbarian discourse' constructed by the dominant Graeco-Roman sources. The depiction of 'barbarians' is revealed as a discursive stereotypical construction of the cultural 'Other', impacted by the power-relations and colonial interaction between the Mediterranean and temperate Europe, or the 'East', rather than being accurate 'ethnographic' descriptions.[15]

The recent interpretations of ancient identities, as well as the development of contextual and discursive source criticism of literary sources, has opened new possibilities for the explanation of these statements by Strabo, and indeed, for a reassessment of the whole methodological framework that determined the interpretation of group identities in pre-Roman Illyricum.[16] This work will focus on Strabo's perception of the 'mixed identity' of the Iapodes and the ways their identity might have existed in the pre-Roman period, while the problem of the identity of the Scordisci will be dealt with elsewhere.

WHAT DID STRABO SAY?

The Iapodes are mentioned in two different parts of the *Geography*. The first mention in 4.6.10 is at the end of the western European depiction, while the other one belongs in the description of Illyricum in 7.5, and is part of the 'barbarian excursus' that deals with Germany, Scythia, Dacia, Illyricum, Macedonia and Thrace. Earlier scholarship assumes that Strabo's information on the Iapodes derives from two different sources, dated to two different periods: Posidonius and Diodorus for book 4 and Polybius and Artemidorus for book 7.[17] Even if used by Strabo, these sources are synthetised with other sources, such as Augustus' *Commentarii*, which devoted a

[11] Ch. Taylor, To Follow a Rule ..., in: R. Shusterman (ed.), *Bourdieu. A Critical Reader* (Cambridge 1999) 42. See G. C. Bentley, Ethnicity and practice, *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 29/10, 1987, 25–55; and D. Swartz, *Culture & Power. The sociology of Pierre Bourdieu* (Chicago 1999) 95–116.

[12] *"The critical focus of investigation from this point of view becomes the ethnic boundary that defines the group, not the cultural stuff it encloses",* F. Barth, Introduction, in: id. (ed.), *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries* (Bergen, 1969) 9–38 the quote from 12; R. Jenkins, Rethinking ethnicity. Identity, categorization and power, *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 17/2, 1994, 197–223.

[13] S. Jones, *Discourses of identity in the interpretations of the past*, in: Graves-Brown et al. (n. 9) 62–80; Jones (n. 9) 68–70. Curta recently emphasizes politisation of cultural *habitus* as the basis for construction of ethnicity in early medieval period, F. Curta, Frontier Ethnogenesis in Late Antiquity. The Danube, the Tervingi, and the Slavs, in: id. (ed.), *Borders, Barriers and Ethnogenesis* (Turnhout 2005) 173–204.

[14] G. Woolf, Beyond Romans and natives, *World Archaeology* 28, 1997, 339–350; J. Webster, Creolizing the Roman provinces, *American Journal of Archaeology* 105/2, 2001, 209–225 (European provinces); S. Goldhill (ed.), *Being Greek under Rome. Cultural Identity, the Second Sophistics and the Development of Empirbe* (Cambridge 2003) ('Greeks' under Roman Empire), etc.

[15] Y. A. Dauge, *Le Barbare. Recherches sur la conception romaine de la barbarie et de la civilization*, Collection Latomus 176 (Bruxelles 1981); P. Cartledge, *The Greeks. The portrait of Self and Other* (Oxford 1993); Wells (n. 8) 99 ff.; etc.

[16] See Olujić (n. 1) 11–24 and D. Dzino, Deconstructing 'Illyrians': Zeitgeist, changing perceptions and the identity of peoples from ancient Illyricum, *Croatian Studies Review. Journal and Bulletin of the Croatian Studies Centre (Sydney)* 5–6, 2007 (in print).

[17] J. Šašel, Strabo, Ocra and Archaeology, in: V. Markotic (ed.), *Ancient Europe and the Mediterranean. Studies Presented in honour of Hugh Hencken* (Warminster 1977) 158 (= *Opera selecta*, Situla 30 [Ljubljana 1992] 631); R. Baladié (ed.), *Strabon. Géographie Tome IV (Livre VII)* (Paris 1989) 305–306; M. Šašel-Kos, The Noarus River in Strabo's Geography, *Tyche* 17, 2002, 145–154.

part to his (i.e. Octavian's) expedition against the Iapodes in 35 BC.[18]

There is a slight but important difference between these statements. In 4.6.10[19] Strabo saw the Iapodes as a *"mixed"* (*ἐπίμικτον*) *ethnos* of Illyrians and Celts. However, in 7.5.2 Strabo sees the Iapodes as a Celtic and Illyrian *ethnos* at the same time.[20] In 7.5.4, however, he does explain why they should be seen in that way. The Iapodes tattoo themselves *"like other Illyrians and Thracians"* (*τοῖς ἄλλοις Ἰλλυριοῖς καὶ Θρᾳξί*), and use Celtic weapons.[21] This perception of Iapodean 'Celtness' in Strabo is reinforced by the fragment of the 16th book of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, preserved in Stephanus Byzantinus, mentioning the Iapodes as the Celts.[22]

Paleolinguistics proved Strabo wrong in the case of the Iapodes, there are no only a few names from Roman-era inscriptions that might be regarded as 'Celtic'.[23] La Tène influences in archaeological record are superficial. There was, undeniably, a certain degree of selectively accepted La Tène influences in the remains of Iapodean material culture, but they are shown in scholarship as a regional reinterpretation and incorporation of outside influences, existing as a part of the Iapodean *habitus*, rather than a 'different ethnic element'.[24] So the Iapodes were placed by earlier scholarship under the shadowy label of 'Illyrian' people, with some 'Celtic' cultural influences, and only the most recent interpretations, hopefully, might lead researchers into developing new interpretative frameworks.[25]

The problem with Strabo's Celto-Illyrian labelling of the Iapodes is that it loses all meaning in the context of recent scholarly developments in understanding how Greeks and Romans saw group identities of 'barbarian' peoples. The existence of both above-mentioned identities Strabo used to depict the Iapodes is questioned, as constructed by outside Graeco-Roman sources in antiquity, and later used in the service of more recent national-political contexts. 'Illyrians' and 'Celts' never existed as common indigenous identities, before being defined as such by Graeco-Roman discursive stereotypes of 'barbarians'. The construction of 'Illyrians' is related to the Roman geo-political term Illyricum. The Romans borrowed the term earlier applied by the Greeks on their western non-Greek neighbours they called *Ἰλλυριοί*, and extended it gradually to the space stretching out all the way between the Adriatic and Danube.[26] Changing perceptions of what Illyricum was reflected wider changes in Roman cognitive geography and Roman geo-political discourse of the late Republic/early Principate, which resulted in the similar and contemporary examples of the Roman colonial constructions of new political regions in temperate Europe, such as Gaul, Germany or Britain.[27]

The indigenous population of Illyricum never shared the same identity before the Roman conquest. In time inhabitants of Roman Illyricum 'became Illyrians' (Dalmatians, Pannonians), in the same ways as the

[18] The *Commentarii*: M. Šašel-Kos, *Appian and Illyricum*, Situla 43 (Ljubljana 2005) 393–397 with references; Strabo and the *Commentarii*: D. Dzino, Strabo 7, 5 and imaginary Illyricum, *Athenaeum* 96/1, 2008 (in print); the expedition: Šašel-Kos, ib., 422–437; Olujić (n. 1) 85–102.

[19] *Καὶ οἱ Ἰάποδες δὲ (ἤδη τοῦτο ἐπίμικτον Ἰλλυριοῖς καὶ Κελτοῖς ἔθνος) περὶ τούτους οἰκοῦσι τοὺς τόπους …* The statement in 4.6.10 breaks the narrative in an unusual way, so the modern editors usually put it in parentheses.

[20] "(*… the Alps extends as far as the land of the Iapodes who are) Celtic and Illyrian ethnos"* *Κελτικοῦ τε ἅμα καὶ Ἰλλυρικοῦ ἔθνους*. In this context Strabo (and Dionysius) used Aristotelian notion of the word *ethnos* to depict group identities of 'barbarians' living in non-polis societies; J. K. Ward, *Ethnos* in the *Politics*. Aristotle and Race, in: J. K. Ward, T. L. Lott (eds.) *Philosophers on Race. Critical Essays* (Oxford 2002) 17–19; cf. Clarke (n. 2) 277–278.

[21] 'Other Illyrians' here most certainly mean southern Illyrians, cf. Dzino (n. 18).

[22] *Ἰάποδες, ἔθνος Κελτικὸν πρὸς τῇ Ἰλλυρία. "Iapodes: a Celtic ethnos who live near Illyria".*

[23] R. Katičić, *Zur Frage der keltischen und pannonischen Namengebieten im römischen Dalmatien,* Godišnjak Centra za Balkanološka Ispitivanja 3/1, 1965.

[24] Olujić (n. 1) 180–185; cf. D. Balen-Letunić, Figuralno ukrašene trapezoidne pojasne kopče tipa Prozor, *Vjesnik Arheološkog Muzeja u Zagrebu*, 28–29, 1995–1996, 27–28; ead., Japodske nekropole s ogulinskog područja, *Vjesnik Arheološkog Muzeja u Zagrebu*, 32–33, 1999–2000, 31–32.

See D. Božič, Die Erforschung der Latènezeit in Slowenien seit Jahr 1964, *Arheološki vestnik* 50, 1999, 189–213 for comprehensive overview and bibliography of more recent research dealing with the La Tène peoples who inhabited neighbourhood of the Iapodes.

[25] E.g. B. Raunig, *Umjetnost i religija prethistorijskih Japoda,* Djela. Akademija nauka i umjetnosti Bosne i Hercegovine. Centar za balkanološka ispitivanja 82/8 (Sarajevo 2004) 13–14 (regional mixture with 'Celts' in the north); I. Bojanovski, *Bosna i Hercegovina u antičko doba,* Djela. Akademija nauka i umjetnosti Bosne i Hercegovine. Centar za balkanološka ispitivanja 66/6 (Sarajevo 1988) 306–308 (acceptance of 'Celtic civilisation'/maintenance of 'traditional culture'); and similar view of Drechler-Bižić (n. 1) 439–441. Recently, Olujić (n. 1), esp. 184–185 and D. Balen-Letunić, The Iapodes, in: ead. (ed.), *Ratnici na razmeđu istoka i zapada. Starije željezno doba u kontinentalnoj Hrvatskoj / Warriors at the Crosssroads of East and West* (Zagreb 2004) 211–257, esp. 244–245 (see also works cited above [n. 24]) opened doors for new interpretation that goes beyond the simplistic notion of 'ethnic mixture' and assesses the Iapodes as a *"separate cultural and ethnic complex"*.

[26] Summarised in Šašel-Kos (n. 18) 219–244.

[27] Gaul: A. M. Riggsby, *Caesar in Gaul and Rome. War in words* (Austin 2006); C. B. Krebs, Imaginary geography in Caesar's *Bellum Gallicum*, *American Journal of Philology* 127, 2006, 111–136. Germany: E. O'Gorman, No place like Rome. Identity and difference in the *Germania* of Tacitus, *Ramus. Critical studies in Greek and Roman Literature* 22/2, 1993, 135–154; or Britain: P. C. N. Stewart, Inventing Britain. The Roman creation and adaptation of an image, *Britannia* 26, 1995, 1–10.

population of imperial Gaul, Britain or Roman Germany became 'Gauls', 'Britons' and 'Germans', constructing these identities inside Roman imperial ideology in the process of 'becoming Roman', rather then reflecting the pre-existing ethnographic situation.[28] 'Illyrianness' might have been a sense of wider regional identity in the later Empire,[29] but in Strabo's times of the early Principate, 'Illyrianness' was nothing but a colonial cultural stereotype imposed from external Graeco-Roman observers as 'ethnic' term on heterogeneous indigenous population of this region.

The 'Celtic debate' is known even better, and points out that the terms 'Celts/Gauls' were constructed by Graeco-Roman literary discourse and applied to the heterogeneous Iron Age population of temperate Europe, who shared certain cultural and linguistic similarities, art styles and customs, but not a sense of common identity.[30]

STRABO AND HYBRIDITY: DIFFERENT APPROACHES

This example of Iapodean 'mixed ethnicity' should be observed in the context of Strabo's wider 'ethnographic' methodology. His 'ethnographic tools' for determining the ethnicity of different peoples were very general and rooted into the outsider Hellenistic tradition and a stereotypical perception of their cultural *habitus*, including ways of life, customs, language, physical appearance and the political organization of certain communities. These pre-conceptions were incorporated in Strabo's use of Augustan imperial ideology that presented Rome as the ultimate civilizing power.[31] Strabo lacks methodological uniformity and changes his ethnographic approach relative to the perceived level of civilization of the people in question – more civilized are distinguished by political factors, less civilized through phenotypical and cultural differences and similarities.[32]

When discussing 'mixed peoples' in Illyricum, it is very interesting to remind oneself that Strabo strongly opposed Ephorus' notice of 'mixed peoples' of Greeks and non-Greeks, a crossbreed between the Greeks and 'barbarians' in Asia Minor.[33] He makes the only exception in the case of the 'barbarophone' Carians, allowing them to exist in his work as a separate ethnic and linguistic category, *tertium quid*, speaking Greek unlike the barbarians, mispronouncing it, unlike the Greeks.[34] Strabo's Roman contemporaries, Livy and Ovid, did not look upon linguistic hybridity kindly either, when hybridity involved a Greek component.[35] Strabo is obviously less sensitive to ethnic mixing when it comes to 'mixed identities' amongst the barbarians in Illyricum, having no objections to their mixing and matching, as seen through his depiction of the Iapodes and Scordisci.

Two different stereotypical perceptions are merged in Strabo's depiction of the Iapodes – the tattooing that belongs to the stereotype of 'Illyrian' and 'Thracian' cultural *habitus*, and the weapons, which are made in the fashion of the inhabitants of Iron age western and central Europe, perceived by the Greeks and Romans as 'Celts'. We can see Strabo's Iapodes and Scordisci inhabiting the ethnological middle ground, constructed as a category *per se*, positioned in-between different ethnic and cultural stereotypes that he used as his ethnographic tools. The fact that they are tattooed like Illyrians and Thracians and that they use weapons made in the 'Celtic' style in no way means that the Iapodes are either 'Illyrians' or 'Celts', or a product of their 'ethnic mixing'. It seems rather that they selectively incorporated stereotypes, which Strabo and his contemporaries might call 'Illyrian' or 'Celtic' and actively created new meanings for cultural/material products associated with other cultural contexts. The Roman sources, and

[28] Cf. literature given in (n. 27) above, and also A. A. Lund, *Zur Germanenbild der Römer. Eine Einführung in die antike Ethnographie* (Heidelberg 1990); G. Woolf, *Becoming Roman. The Origins of Provincial Civilization in Gaul* (Cambridge 1998).

[29] G. Alföldy, Die 'illyrischen' provinzen Roms. Von der Vierfalt zu der Einheit, in: G. Urso (ed.), *Dall'Adriatico al Danubio. L'Illirico nell'età graeca e romana* (I convegni della fondazione Niccolò Canussio 3), Pisa 2004, 207–220.

[30] M. Chapman, *The Celts. The construction of a myth* (New York 1992); S. James, *Atlantic Celts. Ancient People or Modern Invention?* (London 1999); Diepeveen-Jansen (n. 10); J. Collis, *The Celts. Origins, myths & inventions* (Stroud 2003).

[31] E. Ch. L. Van der Vliet, L'ethnographie des Strabon. Idéologie au tradition, in: F. Prontera (ed.), *Strabone. Contributi allo studio della personalità e dell'opera* 1 (Perugia 1984) 29–86; see also P. Thollard, *Barbarie et civilization chéz Strabon. Etude critique des livres III et IV de la Geographie* (Paris 1987) 5–26; G. Salmeri, Regioni, popoli e lingue epicorie d'Asia Minore, and C. Marcaccini, Strabone e l'etnografia Ellenistica, in: A. M. Biraschi, G. Salmeri (eds.), *Strabone e l'Asia Minore* (Perugia 2000) 170–171 and 591–619; Dueck (n. 2) 75–79.

[32] Van der Vliet (n. 31) 38–42; E. Almagor, Who is a barbarian? The barbarians in the ethnological and cultural taxonomies of Strabo, in: Dueck et al. (n. 2) 54. For Strabo's barbarity and civilization in general see Thollard (n. 31), for Strabo's barbarity and civilization in Illyricum, D. Dzino, 'Welcome to the Mediterranean semi-periphery: The place of Illyricum in book 7 of Strabo', *Živa Antika* 56, 2006, 113–128.

[33] Strabo, 14.5.25.

[34] Strabo, 14.2.28; Almagor (n. 32) 44–46; cf. Salmeri (n. 31) 171–180.

[35] Livy 38.17.9 *"hi iam degenerates sunt, mixti, et Gallograeci uere, quod appellantur"* (oddly Strabo knows for these 'Gallogreeks' – the Galatians in Asia Minor – but does not comment on their 'mixed nature' in 12.5.1); Ovid, *Tristia* 3.14.46–49; 5.2.67–68; 5.7.51–52 (the Getae).

Strabo in many ways belonged to these,[36] were more concerned and accordingly much better informed about strategic and tactical information than about the ethnography of the 'barbarians'.[37]

As argued above, Roman perception of 'Illyrianness' was a construction that projected Mediterranean stereotypes of the shared cultural *habitus* of the peoples living between the Adriatic and Danube. The practice of tattooing placed the Iapodes into the category of 'Illyrians' and 'Thracians'.[38] Strabo's view of the Iapodes as the 'Celts' in 7.5.2 also fits well into recent scholarly interpretations that the Greeks and Romans constructed the 'Celts' as a pseudo-ethnic category through their perception of a shared cultural *habitus* amongst the communities of temperate Europe. Strabo shows that his understanding of 'Celtness' was based upon the same stereotypical cognitive perception, reinforced with the elements of their material culture. The existence of late La Tène and La Tène-like artefacts in Iapodean society, or the social values in their society such as 'warrior ethos', was therefore perceived as evidence for their partial belonging to this 'Celtness'.[39] It is especially visible in the fragment of Dionysius of Halicarnassus who indeed regards them as 'Celts'. His source is obviously older than the Roman-constructed notion of Illyricum, and he mentions an Illyria that corresponds with the Greek perception of 'Illyris', which roughly corresponds to the Hellenistic Ardiaean/Illyrian kingdom. Under these circumstances, it is no wonder that the Iapodes are for Dionysius the 'Celts', living close to Hellenistic Illyris, especially in the context of book 16, lost except for excerpts that deal with the events of the 4th century BC.[40]

BEYOND IAPODENESS

The identity of the Iapodes was in reality much more complex than Strabo's notion of 'ethnic mixture'. According to archaeological interpretations, the Iapodes shared similarities with their neighbours the Liburni, Histri and Veneti, participating with them in the construction of a wider regional cultural *habitus*.[41] At the same time they also maintained strong cultural links with the group which the Romans knew as the Colapiani.[42] Below this shared regional cultural *habitus*, the Iapodes possessed certain unique cultural elements that were rightly recognized and defined as 'Iapodean archaeological culture' by modern scholars. However, archaeology also noted recognizable regional differences inside 'Iapodean archaeological culture', thus fragmenting the singular 'Iapodeness' of their material culture into a plurality of regional sub-cultural 'Iapodenesses' that surrounded the Iapodean cultural 'core' in the Lika and Ogulin-Plaščani valley.[43] There are common Iapodean elements in the material culture and the scholarship has recognized specific art forms and an increased emphasis on conservatism, militarization and egalitarianism in their burial rites.[44]

Below this regionally fragmented 'Iapodeness', the population in question formed different political identities before the Roman conquest, described by the sources under Roman terms: the 'Transalpine' and 'Cisalpine' Iapodes who were dominated by the communities of the Metuli and Arupini respectively.[45] Recently, Olujić disputed the existence of a politi-

[36] K. Clarke, In Search of the Author of Strabo's Geography, *Journal of Roman Studies* 87, 1997, 92–110 on Strabo's personal identity-negotiation between 'Greek' and 'Roman'.

[37] S. P. Mattern, *Rome and the Enemy. Imperial Strategy in the Principate* (Berkeley 1999) 66–80.

[38] Nothing is known of tattooing amongst the 'Illyrians' apart from this note. It was without doubt part of the regional cultural *habitus* in an earlier and later period, M. Petrić, On tattooing and cicatrization in a prehistoric population of a part of the Balkans, *Godišnjak. Centar za balkanološka ispitivanja* 4/2, 1966, 151–171. For written sources on Thracian tattooing see C. P. Jones, *Stigma:* Tattooing and Branding in Graeco-Roman Antiquity, *Journal of Roman Studies* 77, 1987, 145–146.

[39] Weapons of any kind are very rarely found in the Iapodean graves, and start to appear only after the late 4th century BC. However, strong emphasis on martial values in their visual art and burial customs strongly suggest the existence of La Tène-influenced martial ideology amongst the Iapodes, cf. Olujić (n. 1) 182–184; D. Balen-Letunić, Novi prikaz japodskog ratnika iz okoline Gračaca, in: M. Blečić, M. Črešnar, B. Häsnel, A. Hellmuth, E. Kaiser, C. Metzner-Nebelsick (eds.) *Scripta Praehistorica in Honorem Biba Teržan*, Situla 44 (Ljubljana 2007) 384.

[40] Dionysius' dating can be considered as quite convincing, cf. C. E. Shultze, Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Roman chronology, *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society* 41, 1995, 192–214.

[41] B. Olujić, Ethnie, culture, identité. Problemes de l'origine des Iapodes et des Liburniens (âge du Bronze, âge du Fer), in: P. Cabanes (ed.), *L'Illyrie méridionale et l'Epire dans l'Antiquité 3*, *Actes du IIIe colloque international de Chantilly 16–19 octobre 1996* (Paris 1999) 57–60.

[42] Most significant works on the Colapiani: D. Božič, Ljudje ob Krki in Kolpi v latenski dobi (Zur lat nezeitlichen Bevölkerung an Krka und Kolpa), *Arheološki Vestnik* 52, 2001, 181–198; cf. also L. Čučković, The Colapiani, in: Balen-Letunić (n. 25) 173–209.

[43] On regional differences see: Olujić (n. 1) 107–117 and 163 ff. Also D. Balen-Letunić (n. 24, 1999–2000), 31–32 on the example of the fibulae.

[44] Olujić (n. 1) 160–175; Balen-Letunić (n. 24, 1999–2000) (burial rites); Raunig (n. 26) art forms.

[45] Appian, *Illyrike* 10, 16, 18, 21: *Ἰάποδες δὲ οἱ ἐντὸς Ἄλπεων Ἰάποδες δὲ οἱ πέραν Ἄλπεων*". See S. Čače, Prilozi proučavanju političkog uređenja naroda sjeverozapadnog Ilirika,

cal division inside the Iapodes, representing it as a product of the Roman perspective – a construction of Roman sources. His argument is based on Strabo's unified view of the Iapodes, as well as the point that only sources based in the context of Octavian's campaigns in 35 BC (Dio and Appian) knew of this internal division.[46] Although a well-argued view, I am not fully convinced by this opinion, as the cultural similarity does not necessarily reveal either ethnic or political unity of certain space. Ethnicity is usually formed out of a few cultural elements that are used to mark the identity, rather than through the wholeness of the culture.[47] Appian, drawing upon Augustus' *Commentarii*, states that the Transalpine Iapodes, not the Iapodes as a whole, were first conquered by Augustus, which reveals that his source, Augustus himself, deliberately labelled them as a separate political unit.[48]

Taking Strabo as an authority on 'barbarian ethnography' is also a risky matter. Firstly, his work is a part of Roman imperial discourse, which reflects the relationship between knowledge and power, and draws upon and reproduces the relationship of dominance within society.[49] In this case the dominance of the Mediterranean colonizer over the 'barbarian' colonized. Colonial hybridity in more recent history is a product of the uneasiness and ambiguous stand of the colonizer towards the 'biological' and intellectual hybridity of the colonized.[50] Roman civilizing discourse encounters contradictions reflected in the more recent Western colonial discourse: *"One of the most striking contradictions about colonialism is that it needs both to 'civilise' its others and to fix them into perpetual 'otherness'."*[51] Strabo 'civilizes' the Iapodes through his projection of their political singularity, by terming their settlements 'poleis' (7.5.4), but he also fixes them into the perpetual 'otherness' by constructing the notion of their poverty (7.5.4), and presenting them in the hybrid, in-between cultural space between the stereotypes of 'Illyrians' and 'Celts'.[52] This cultural translation makes defining the Iapodes to his audience more straightforward, similar to the Roman perception of 'kings' of the Gauls. They saw these group organisations and placed their own value terms on their group structure.

There is no consistency in Strabo's 'ethnography', as argued earlier, neither in terminology nor in approach, so his mention of the Iapodes as a singular identity does not necessarily show their political singularity. It only reveals a singularity that might be the projection of a cultural or ethnic stereotype arising from his outsider perspective. Finally, the archaeology of the pre-Roman settlements, especially their fortifications, suggests that communities of the Iapodes were politically disunited, lacking a central authority that would dominate their space.[53] The sources knew of more specific identities in (what they called) the Iapodean *civitates*, such as the Metulum, Arupium, Terponus, Avendo, and Monetium, and it is obvious that their identity was constructed on this level as well.[54]

Tattooing of the Iapodes shows another means of expressing their identity in a more specific way. The marking of the human body, whether as tattooing or branding in the ancient world, is classified as religious or decorative, but branding was also used as a punishment.[55] However, Jones, in his influential study of tattooing in the ancient world underplays the significance of tattooing as an expression of the identity of those who are tattooed. Tattoos became a mark of identity that distinguished the social group that practiced tattooing from others who did not tattoo themselves, or used different designs. Regardless of the initial context of tattoos, which were perhaps religious, magical, medicinal or decorative, tattooing became a mark of identity when it was visibly displayed on human bodies in parts of late Iron Age Europe.[56] Tattooing was not always the mark of a group identity, but also a mark of social distinction

Radovi Filozofskog Fakulteta u Zadru 18/8, 1979, 55 ff.; Šašel-Kos (n. 18) 422–437.

[46] Olujić (n. 1) 87, 121–122.

[47] S. Lucy, Ethnic and Cultural Identities, in: M. Díaz-Andreu, S. Lucy (eds), *The Archaeology of Identity. Approaches to Gender, Age, Status, Ethnicity, and Religion* (London, New York 2005) 86–109. Certainly, these symbols are actively manipulated by human agency, as material culture is an active element in the negotiation of ethnicity; I. Hodder, *Reading the Past. Current Approaches to Interpretation in Archaeology* (Cambridge 1986) 9.

[48] Appian, *Illyrike* 21.

[49] J. C. Barrett, Fields of discourse. Reconstituting a social archaeology, *Critique of Anthropology* 7/3, 1988, 5–16.

[50] Young (n. 4); Bhabha (n. 3) 207–209; A. Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism* [2nd edition] (London, New York 2004) 103–105; 145–153.

[51] Loomba (n. 50) 145.

[52] As he does in his literary construction of Illyricum in 7.5, Dzino (n. 18). Cf. Bhabha (n. 3) 66–84 for the principles of, what Bhabha calls 'cultural fixity' and process of ambivalence that is central to the role of stereotypes in the colonial discourse.

[53] Olujić (n. 1) 144–159 for the settlements. Čače (n. 44) 74 suggests their lack of political unity during the Roman conquest, while Olujić, 95–96 suggests political unity under the leadership of Metulum, or leaves this question open in 159.

[54] Appian, *Illyrike* 16, 18–20; Strabo, 7.5.4; Tibullus, *Panegiricus Messalae* 4.1.110. There were also the communities of Ortoplini and Parentini mentioned on *CIL* III 15053.

[55] C. P. Jones (n. 38) 144–146 distinguishes 'barbarian' tattooing as either religious (Egypt) or decorative (elsewhere).

[56] The evidence from the pre-Roman coinage in Gaul suggests that it was usual to mark cheeks and necks in northwest Gaul, C. Thomas, The interpretation of the Pictish symbols, *The Archaeological Journal* 120, 1963, 92, Fig. 15.

inside the group, the privilege of the elite, or a part of masculine identity-construction.[57] In a recent comparable study of tattooing in pre-Roman and early Roman Britain, it is well-argued that tattooing there was visibly displayed and short-lived, taking place only during the period of Roman conquest as a part of changing communal and private identities, resistance and acculturation.[58] Unfortunately, due to the lack of evidence, we do not know what was the real purpose of tattooing amongst the Iapodes, whether it signified social distinction, or it was a sign of individual, communal or group/political identity. In all certainty it transgressed all three levels of identity-construction.

When and whether the Iapodes ever 'became Iapodes', cannot be determined beyond speculation. The construction of their identity existed in different contexts: cultural, political, communal and individual, but was also impacted by the outsider view that saw them as Iapodes. The sources referring to the Iapodes before the Roman conquest[59] never specify whether they refer to *the* Iapodes or *a* Iapodes – to the unified ethnically and politically compact Iapodes, to the individual communities they commonly saw as Iapodes, to changing political alliances in and around Iapodean space, or to a different people of the same name from Transpadana.[60] Especially questionable is if the Iapodes actually ever shared the sense of 'Iapodeness' – belonging to the same community before the Roman occupation, and how strong it was, or whether their identity was constructed through the socio-political contexts of different communities inhabiting parts of Iapodean space. If it indeed ever existed, 'Iapodeness' must be put in the context of the formation of more complex political structures in this area that occurred no earlier than the 4th century, and especially the conflicts with the Romans in the 2nd and 1st century BC. It is impossible to consider the formation of group identities/ethnicities in antiquity outside of the socio-political context. Ethnicity is a social construction that reflects the power relationships inside society and its social and political mobilization, regardless of the period in which it was constructed.[61] The question whether 'Iapodeness' was just a unifying identity imposed on this people by their conquerors after the formation of an administrative *civitas Iapodum* cannot be excluded as a possibility, but falls outside of the scope of this paper and requires separate discussion.[62]

CONCLUSION

Therefore, the statements of Strabo on the mixed identity of the 'barbarians' from Illyricum show several important things. Strabo allows the possibility that hybrid, in-between identities can exist amongst the 'barbarians', unlike his disapproval of the possibility of hybridity constructed between the Greeks and non-Greeks. Secondly, Strabo's 'ethnography' was based on cultural stereotypes, so when confronted with regional recasting and restructuring of existing colonial stereotypes in Illyricum, he employs hybrid terminology in his description in order to define it.[63] Finally, these statements show that the way in which the Iapodes expressed their identity has nothing to do with either 'Illyrians' or 'Celts'. It was a unique way of recasting La Tène cultural *habitus* with specific ways in which their own personal and group identities were expressed and constructed, and also recognized by outsiders as 'the Iapodes'. I do not think that there was a single narrative of Iapodean identity. The group ancient sources and modern scholars conveniently call 'Iapodes' constructed their sense of identity through their regional belongings, shared cultural *habitus*, the communication of that *habitus* to the surrounding *habiti* (perception of 'others'), and politicization of regional identities. The conflicts with the Romans might also ignite sense of common identity, but, paradoxically, it might also be the Roman-created Iapodean *civitas* that accomplished the construction of the 'Iapodeness' as a sense of common identity.

After this discussion on Iapodean identities it is simply not possible to avoid the question of its wider

[57] E.g. Thracian elite, Herodotus, *Histories* 5.6.2. Tattooing might also be an element in the construction of masculine identity, G. Carr, Woad, Tattooing and Identity in Later Iron Age and Early Roman Britain, *Oxford Journal of Archaeology* 24/3, 2005, 285.

[58] Carr (n. 57) esp. 283–286.

[59] Livy, 10.2.4; 43.1; 43.5; *Periochae* 59; Frontinus, *Stratagemata* 2.5.28; Appian, *Illyrike* 11; *Insc. It.* 13/1, 82, 559.

[60] V. Vedaldi Iasbez, *La Venetia orientale e l'Histria. Le fonti letterarie greche e latine fino alla caduta dell'Impero Romano d'Occidente* (Rome 1994) 267 arguing that there were the Iapodes in Transpadana and they were referred to by Cicero, *Pro Balbo* 32; Vergil, *Georgics* 3.474–477; Servius ap. Vergil, *Georgics* 3.475.

[61] Jones (n. 13); recently F. Curta, Some remarks on ethnicity in medieval archaeology, *Early Medieval Europe* 15/2, 2007, 177 ff.

[62] Pliny, *Naturalis Historia* 3.143; *CIL* V 3346. There are also native *praepositi et principes Iapodum* known from dedications from Golubić-Privilica locality; *CIL* III 14324, 14326, 14328; see Bojanovski (n. 26) 313–314. This still does not necessarily reflect 'Iapodeness' as their own identity but might well be new, imperial-constructed identity of *civitas Iapodum*.

[63] *"Hybridity thus makes difference into sameness, and sameness into difference, but in a way that makes the same no longer the same, the different no longer simply different."* Young (n. 4) 26.

context, asking whether future research of identities in Illyricum must remain focused on ethnicity, as it has been in earlier scholarship. It is apparent that individuals and communities who lived in ancient Illyricum formed their identities on the intersection between sameness and difference with other communities and across a number of different social spaces and contexts that they inhabited and participated in. The search for cognitive singularities of their ethnicity, their 'ethnic and cultural layers' and ethnic boundaries, reflect rather our own need as scholars to insert some order into the chaotic world of intersected identities of pre-industrial societies. However, it does not help us to explain how they formed their identities, why they did it and what were the ways in which they expressed and constructed these identities.

In order to do so scholars must rely on archaeology and written sources. Archaeology provides hard facts and aids significantly in the understanding of the *habitus* of these peoples, and its historical development. However, as shown earlier, material evidence alone, outside of the social and political context in which it existed, is frequently of no assistance in establishing or mapping the ethnicity of these peoples. A particular type of fibulae per se does not show ethnicity of the persons which carried it. It shows customs, habits and fashion of its carriers, from a particular period in which the fibula was dated. Yet, if the same fibula was carried by soldiers of a particular army, it could be perceived and imagined as an 'ethnic boundary', dividing 'Us' and 'Them', by both its carriers and those in opposition to them. Thus, contextual mapping of artefacts appears to be the best possible way for scholars who approach the construction of imagined communities of pre-Roman Illyricum to attempt to understand the construction of these communities from archaeological perspective.

Written sources mainly reflect the stereotypical views of ancient Greek and Roman 'ethnographers' who developed a discursive colonial projection of ethnic singularities in their periphery such as 'Celts', 'Illyrians', and 'Germans', from their own Mediterranean-centred perspective. However, these singularities in all certainty did not exist in isolation from Roman imperial discourse. The same 'ethnographers' also described ethnic singularities within Illyricum such as the 'Pannonii', 'Delmatae', 'Liburni', or 'Iapodes', which also existed in the frequently interlocked ideological contexts of the Roman Empire and earlier Greek colonialism,[64] their joint Mediterranean perception of the cultural 'Other'.

Instead of ethnicity, the research should focus on the ways and contexts in which the peoples of Illyricum in pre-Roman and Roman times constructed and expressed their identities. These contexts are numerous: political,[65] funerary,[66] or even going all the way down to the personal level, such as the negotiation of individual identities of Dalmatian sailors from the Misene fleet.[67] It becomes more and more urgent to break up and finally abandon the grand narrative of ethnicity in Illyricum, to paraphrase Lyotard, and focus on its smaller pieces, using archaeological research, socio-anthropological conceptual methodologies and contextual and genre literary criticism of written sources. Only then the scholarship might be able to approach indigenous group identities in Illyricum with the more complex interpretative frameworks, being more aware of interlocked networks and parallel narratives of their identity-construction in which they in fact existed.

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[64] The term *Λιβυρνοί* ... in earliest instance reflect the Greek cognitive common name for the indigenous population of the eastern Adriatic, regardless of their real identities, S. Čače, Corcira e la tradizione Greca dell'espanzione dei Liburni nell'Adriatico orientale, in: N. Cambi, S. Čače, B. Kirigin (eds.), *Greek Influence along the East Adriatic Coast* (Split 2002) 83–100.

[65] D. Dzino, Delmati, vino i formiranje etničkog identiteta u predrimskom Iliriku, *Vjesnik za arheologiju i povijest dalmatinsku* 99, 2006, 71–80.

[66] Olujić (n. 1) 160–175.

[67] *C. Ravonius Celer qui et Bato Scenobarbi natione Delmata*, (*CIL* X 3618, cf. *CIL* X 3666 [= *ILS* 466]; *CIL* X 3468 [= *ILS* 2715]; *AE* 1912, 84); D. Rendić-Miočević, *Iliri i Antički svijet. Ilirološke studije* (Split 1989) 661–662, 759; A. Domić-Kunić, *Classis praetoria Misenatium* s posebnim obzirom na mornare podrijetlom iz Dalmacije i Panonije, *Vjesnik Arheološkog muzeja u Zagrebu*, 28–29, 1995–1996, 53–54.

“Iliri, ki so Kelti“: Strabon in identitete “barbarov“ iz Ilirika

Povzetek

Avtor v članku analizira Strabonovo oznako Japodov kot “mešanice Keltov in Ilirov“, kar mu je izhodišče za preučevanje identitet oz. skupinskih identitet predrimskega Ilirika. Strabonovo pojmovanje “mešane identitete“ je postavljeno v kontekst sodobne post-kolonialne kritike grških in rimskih besedil, v katerih so “barbarska“ ljudstva opredeljena na osnovi literarno obarvanih etnografskih opisov. Strabon, kakor tudi drugi antični pisci njegove dobe, je dojemal in slikal “barbarska“ ljudstva skozi tedaj aktualne kulturne stereotipe in tako ustvaril njihove identitete v skladu s temi stereotipi; tovrstne žanrske opise pa so pričakovali tudi njegovi poslušalci.

V prispevku avtor razpravlja tudi o različnih kontekstih, v katerih je japodska identiteta lahko obstajala v predrimskem obdobju, in ponovno kritično ovrednoti v strokovni literaturi uveljavljeno pojmovanje “japodskosti“ kot samostojne identitete. Avtor se zavzema za to, da bi v prihodnosti morale biti zgodovinske in arheološke raziskave Japodov in tudi drugih ljudstev antičnega Ilirika osredotočene na različne kontekste, v katerih so si ta ljudstva gradila svojo identiteto. Na ta način bi lahko ustrezneje interpretirali prepletene mreže identitet, v katerih so sobivala.

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